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Regulations on the National Research Programmes (NRP) of 25.02.2025

The Research Council

based on Article 10 paragraph 6 of the Organisational Regulation of the Research Council in conjunction with Articles 9 and 10 of the Federal Research and Innovation Promotion Act (RIPA) and Section 2 of the Federal Research and Innovation Promotion Ordinance (RIPA-O)

issues the following Regulations:

Chapter 1 General provisions

Article 1 Subject matter

The Regulations of the National Research Programmes (hereinafter: NRP Regulations) set out the organisation, tasks and competencies associated with the implementation of the National Research Programmes (NRPs) entrusted to the SNSF by the Federal Council based on Article 10, paragraph 2 letter c of the Federal Research and Innovation Promotion Act of 14 December 2012 (RIPA).

Article 2 Principles

¹ The Thematic and Solution-Oriented Research Programme Committee (hereinafter Programme Committee) is responsible for the effective promotion of research in National Research Programmes. It delegates the steering of the individual National Research Programmes to the relevant steering body in accordance with Article 7 paragraph 2 RIPA-O.

² The Programme Committee reports on ongoing NRPs to the Academic Board of the Research Council annually (Article 10 paragraph 4 letter k, Organisational Regulations of the Research Council of 24 April 2024 and, if necessary, applies to it for a reorientation of the NRP funding scheme.

Article 3 Structure

¹ An NRP has the following ordinary organisational structure:

- a) Programme Committee;
- b) Delegate of the Research Council;
- c) Governing body, generally the Steering Committee;
- d) President of the Steering Committee;
- e) Head of Knowledge Exchange;
- f) Programme Manager;
- g) Representative(s) of the Federal Administration;

h) If applicable, further representatives, e.g., from cantons, local authorities, organisations.

² In derogation from paragraph 1 above, the Academic Board of the Research Council may, in response to a request made by the Programme Committee, decide on another organisational structure.

Chapter 2 The Programme Committee

Article 4 Functions and responsibilities

¹ The Programme Committee is fully responsible for the execution of the NRP commissioned by the Federal Council.

² The Programme Committee determines a suitable organisational structure in accordance with Article 3 for each NRP.

³ The Programme Committee supervises progress and decides on any necessary measures.

Article 5 Tasks and competencies

The Programme Committee:

- a) designates from amongst its members a Delegate of the Research Council and, if necessary, a Deputy for each NRP;
- b) draws up and adopts feasibility assessments and programme concepts for individual programme proposals, subject to the approval of the Academic Board of the Research Council;
- c) elects the President of the Steering Committee for the entire duration of an NRP, subject to the approval of the Academic Board of the Research Council;
- d) elects the other members of the Steering Committee for the entire duration of an NRP;
- e) adopts Call Documents drawn up by the Steering Committee, subject to the approval of the Academic Board of the Research Council;
- f) decides on funding recommendations of the Steering Committee;
- g) approves, in response to a request made by the Steering Committee, the Management Principles and the budget for implementing an NRP;
- h) decides, in response to a request made by the President of the Steering Committee, on the awarding of the “Knowledge Exchange” mandate and any other associated mandates;
- i) decides, in response to a request made by the Steering Committee, on the knowledge exchange concept;

- j) decides, in response to a request made by the Steering Committee, on the awarding of any other mandates;
- k) receives, at least annually, the Steering Committee report on the progress of an NRP and decides on measures if necessary;
- l) decides, in response to a request made by the Steering Committee, on the termination or re-structuring of research projects;
- m) decides, in response to a request made by the Steering Committee, on the programme synthesis concept;
- n) approves the “Final programme report of the Steering Committee to the attention of the Research Council”, and grants discharge to the Steering Committee;
- o) decides on the “Final programme report of the Research Council to the attention of the Federal Council” and forwards it to the Academic Board of the Research Council for approval;
- p) decides on any evaluations or monitoring of individual aspects of NRPs, or of individual NRPs, or on any impact assessment.

Chapter 3 Delegate of the Research Council

Article 6 Functions and responsibilities

¹ The Delegate of the Research Council acts on behalf of the Programme Committee (Article 4 paragraph 1) for the relevant NRP.

² They supervise compliance with SNSF standards during implementation of the NRP.

³ They represent the Programme Committee vis-à-vis the Steering Committee and other actors in accordance with Article 3 paragraph 1.

⁴ They provide conflict management in case of conflict between NRP actors.

⁵ The Delegate of the Research Council coordinates the assumption of responsibilities and completion of tasks with the Programme Manager.

Article 7 Tasks and competencies

The Delegate of the Research Council:

- a) submits nomination proposals for the President of the Steering Committee and for its other members to the Programme Committee;
- b) participates in Steering Committee meetings as an observer;

- c) chairs evaluation meetings (panel chair);
- d) gives their views on the Steering Committee's activities to the Programme Committee. If they do not agree with a request or recommendation, they justify their position;
- e) informs the Steering Committee of decisions made by the Programme Committee;
- f) regularly reviews progress and achievement of programme objectives and promptly informs the Programme Committee of facts that could require measures;
- g) draws up and signs, together with the Programme Committee Chair and the Programme Manager, the final programme report of the Research Council to the attention of the Federal Council and submits it to the Programme Committee for decision and to the Academic Board of the Research Council for approval.

Chapter 4 The Steering Committee

Article 8 Composition

¹ The Steering Committee consists of national and international experts with the necessary knowledge to select and accompany projects in the thematic area covered by the relevant NRP.

² In composing the Steering Committee, diversity is taken into account, particularly in terms of knowledge and experience, stage of academic career, gender, different types and areas of research and research organisations.

³ If necessary, the Steering Committee may include ad hoc experts to fill any gaps, particularly with regard to evaluation activities. The Steering Committee defines their tasks and competencies as well as their term of office and requests their election by the Programme Committee (cf. Article 5 letter d). They shall be compensated for their work in the same way as members of the Steering Committee.

⁴ Provisions for Steering Committees apply mutatis mutandis to other steering bodies appointed by the Programme Committee pursuant to Article 3 paragraph 2.

Article 9 Functions and responsibilities

¹ The Steering Committee is a body appointed by the Programme Committee for the overall management of an NRP.

² It is responsible for the strategic orientation of the NRP. Decisions of strategic relevance for the NRP must be approved by the Steering Committee.

³ The Steering Committee assumes its responsibilities in consideration of the standards, regulations and guidelines of the SNSF.

⁴ Members of the Steering Committee may not submit project proposals and may not participate in any way in research activities within the NRP.

Article 10 Tasks and competencies

The Steering Committee :

- a) draws up Call documents;
- b) evaluates the submitted pre-proposals and makes the final decision on the admission to submit full proposals;
- c) evaluates the submitted full proposals and ensures programme coherence;
- d) submits funding recommendations to the Programme Committee for decision. If the recommendation is rejected, the matter is returned to the Steering Committee for re-evaluation;
- e) adopts the Management Principles for the implementation of the NRP, subject to approval by the Programme Committee;
- f) adopts the knowledge exchange concept, subject to approval by the Programme Committee;
- g) decides, if necessary, to tender mandates for specific tasks or commissioned studies. Offers selected by the Steering Committee are submitted to the Programme Committee for approval;
- h) provides scientific support for projects, oversees the progress of research works and assesses interim and final project reports. If necessary, it can propose to the Programme Committee for a restructuring or termination of individual projects;
- i) provides the Programme Committee with an annual report on the progression of the NRP;
- j) evaluates NRP follow-up applications (individual financial applications with suitable thematic scope) and makes the final decision on their approval or rejection;
- k) commissions and adopts the programme synthesis concept, subject to approval by the Programme Committee. Members of the Steering Committee participate actively in the drawing up of the programme synthesis;
- l) is the editor of the programme synthesis and takes responsibility for it;
- m) adopts the "Final programme report of the Steering Committee to the attention of the Research Council".

Chapter 5 The President of the Steering Committee

Article 11 Functions and responsibilities

¹ The President of the Steering Committee chairs the Steering Committee.

² She or he:

- a) acts as the overall director of the Steering Committee (Article 9 paragraph 1) for the relevant NRP;
- b) is responsible for the implementation of the strategic orientation of the NRP;
- c) represents the NRP, both internally and externally;
- d) represents the activities of the Steering Committee vis-à-vis the Programme Committee.

³ Representational duties may, in individual cases, be delegated to other members of the Steering Committee or to further actors of the NRP.

⁴ They carry out their tasks and responsibilities in close collaboration with the Programme Manager.

Article 12 Tasks and competencies

The President of the Steering Committee:

- a) plans and chairs Steering Committee meetings with the exception of evaluation meetings (Article 7c);
- b) overlooks the submitted proposals and ensures programme coherence;
- c) draws up the Management Principles for the implementation of the NRP;
- d) defines, together with the Programme Manager, the proposal for the mandate “Knowledge Exchange” and any other associated mandates, and submits it to the Programme Committee;
- e) provides support for and supervises the preparation and execution of the knowledge exchange concept;
- f) plans and chairs programme conferences, together with the Head of Knowledge Exchange and the Programme Manager;
- g) reports annually to the Programme Committee on the progress of the programme, on behalf of the Steering Committee;
- h) accompanies the development of the programme synthesis concept and submits it to the Steering Committee and Programme Committee;

- i) accompanies and supervises the development of the programme synthesis from concept to publication;
- j) draws up and signs, together with the Programme Manager and the Head of Knowledge Exchange, the “Final programme report of the Steering Committee to the attention of the Research Council” and submits it to the Steering Committee;
- k) submits the “Final programme report of the Steering Committee to the Programme Committee for approval by the Research Council”;
- l) may only formally represent the SNSF vis-à-vis third parties with express authorisation.

Chapter 6 The Head of Knowledge Exchange

Article 13 Functions and responsibilities

¹ The Head of Knowledge Exchange manages the knowledge exchange of the NRP from conception to implementation.

² Depending on the requirements of the NRP, other terms than “Knowledge Exchange” may be used, such as “Knowledge and Technology Transfer”.

³ The Head of Knowledge Exchange coordinates the planning and execution of their tasks with the Programme Manager.

Article 14 Tasks and competencies

The Head of Knowledge Exchange:

- a) submits an overall concept for knowledge exchange to the Steering Committee;
- b) suggests individual knowledge exchange projects according to the overall concept to the President of the Steering Committee for approval;
- c) manages the execution of knowledge exchange projects;
- d) participates in the organisation and realisation of programme conferences, together with the President of the Steering Committee and the Programme Manager;
- e) reports to the Steering Committee at least once a year about the progress of the work and the further course of action;
- f) accompanies the development of the programme synthesis from concept to publication;
- g) may only formally represent the SNSF vis-à-vis third parties with express authorisation.

Chapter 7 The Programme Manager

Article 15 Functions and responsibilities

¹ The Programme Manager is responsible for managing the operational activities of the NRP.

² They ensure the smooth operation of processes in all phases of the programme, from initiation to final programme reporting.

³ They are responsible for the ongoing exchange of information between the NRP stakeholders and, together with the Delegate of the Research Council, for compliance with the implementation principles common to all NRPs, the SNSF standards and regulations.

⁴ They advise and support all NRP stakeholders and ensure the transfer of experience and knowledge management from ongoing and completed NRPs.

⁵ They are responsible for the processes within the SNSF Administrative Offices and coordinate the employees involved.

⁶ They carry out their functions and responsibilities in close collaboration with the President of the Steering Committee, the Head of Knowledge Exchange and the Delegate of the Research Council.

Article 16 Tasks and competencies

The Programme Manager:

- a) prepares the activities of the NRP to the attention of the Programme Committee, in consultation with the President of the Steering Committee;
- b) prepares Steering Committee meetings, in consultation with the President of the Steering Committee and the Head of Knowledge Exchange. They participate in the meetings of the Steering Committee and implement the decisions taken;
- c) is responsible for planning and carrying out the evaluation procedure and for issuing written rulings;
- d) prepares meetings for the evaluation of pre-proposals and full proposals, in consultation with the Delegate of the Research Council. They participate in the meetings in an advisory capacity and support the Chair in ensuring orderly conducting of meetings (Office Chair);
- e) draws up the Management Principles, together with the President of the Steering Committee;
- f) plans the programme conferences, together with the President of the Steering Committee and the Head of Knowledge Exchange, and coordinates their organisation;

- g) support and advises on the tendering and awarding of mandates;
- h) defines, together with the President of the Steering Committee, the proposal for awarding the “Knowledge Exchange” mandate and any other associated mandates;
- i) supports and advises on the development of the knowledge exchange concept;
- j) ensures that the knowledge exchange concept is implemented in accordance with the contract, together with the President of the Steering Committee;
- k) accompanies, advises and supports the development of the programme synthesis from concept to publication;
- l) monitors compliance with the budget;
- m) coordinates and supports communication measures, in particular press releases and press conferences;

Chapter 8 Representation by the Federal Administration

Article 17 Federal representation

¹ The representatives of the Federal Administration are nominated by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI).

² In agreement with the SNSF, the SERI regulates the rights and duties of the Representatives of the Federal Administration in the Steering Committees and sets out the rules in a specification of duties.

³ The designated representatives of the Federal Administration:

- a) may not belong to any body of the SNSF;
- b) are not entitled to vote as part of the Steering Committee;
- c) are not entitled to apply for funding in the relevant NRP.

Chapter 9 Closing provisions

Article 18 Repeal of existing regulations and entry into force

¹ The Organisational Regulations of the National Research Programmes (NRP) of 14 July 2015 are herewith repealed.

² These regulations enter into force on 1 April 2025.

Article 19 Transitional provision

¹ These regulations apply mutatis mutandis to NRPs in progress at the time of entry into force. From 1 January 2025, the Academic Board will be responsible for decisions and approvals that are assigned to the Presiding Board of the Research Council. The responsibilities and tasks of the Division will be carried out by the Programme Committee from 1 April 2025.

² Research Council delegates in NRPs that are already running when the regulations come into force and whose term of office as Research Council member ends after the regulations come into force may exercise their office as delegate until the end of the NRP in question.